

12-13-2004

University of Northern Iowa Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes, December 13, 2004

University of Northern Iowa. Faculty Senate.

Copyright ©2004 Faculty Senate, University of Northern Iowa

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uni.edu/facsenate_documents



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you

Recommended Citation

University of Northern Iowa. Faculty Senate., "University of Northern Iowa Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes, December 13, 2004" (2004). *Documents - Faculty Senate*. 979.
https://scholarworks.uni.edu/facsenate_documents/979

This Minutes is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Senate at UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Documents - Faculty Senate by an authorized administrator of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uni.edu.

SUMMARY OF FACULTY SENATE MEETING 12/13/04

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bankston called the meeting to order at 3:20 P.M.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes of the 11/22/04 meeting by Senator Chancey; second by Senator Herndon. Motion passed.

CALL FOR PRESS IDENTIFICATION

No press present.

COMMENTS FROM PROVOST PODOLEFSKY

Bev Kopper was attending today's meeting for the Provost as he was involved in a collective bargaining meeting. She noted that the Provost would be at the Board of Regents meeting on Wednesday and Thursday.

COMMENTS FROM FACULTY CHAIR, DAN POWER

Faculty Chair Power noted that he had no comments but would like to extend seasons greetings to the Senate.

COMMENTS FROM CHAIR, RONNIE BANKSTON

Chair Bankston noted that he will also be attending the Board of Regents meeting on Wednesday and Thursday in Ames.

CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR ITEMS FOR DOCKETING

870 Resolution on Dual Career Couples

Motion to docket in regular order by as item #780 by Senator Chancey; second by Senator Zaman. Motion passed.

Chair Bankston noted that this item will be discussed at the January 10, 2005 meeting.

ONGOING BUSINESS

Chair Bankston stated that the final document from the Faculty Senate on Faculty Development/Resources that was sent to the Campus Advisory Group (CAG) was included in the senator's packets along with the individual comments from each college.

CONSIDERATION OF DOCKETED ITEMS

779 Liberal Arts Core Committee Annual Report for 2003-2004 Academic Year

Bev Kopper, Liberal Arts Core Coordinator, was present to review the report for the Senate.

Chair Bankston received the Liberal Arts Core Committee Annual Report for 2003 - 2004 Academic Year on behalf of the Faculty Senate.

Senator Heston moved, as a friendly amendment, for the Faculty Senate to extend a note of appreciation to the Liberal Arts Core Committee for their dedication and hard work; second by Senator MacLin.

Motion passed.

Chair Bankston noted that he will prepare a letter of appreciation to members of the LACC that are currently serving.

New Business for Discussion

Chair Bankston noted that the Senate is providing an opportunity for Senators to bring forward items for discussion.

Chair Bankston stated that when the Senate addressed what would make UNI a better place there were four categories that items were placed; one was items that the Faculty Senate could address in the future. He distributed a list of six items that had been placed on the Faculty Senate list, noting that he would like to begin addressing these items if time permits in the. The items are: Establish a Faculty Senate Speaker and Seminar Series; Evaluate Initial and On-Going New Faculty Orientation; Examine Possible Grade Inflation On Campus; Investigate Reestablishment of the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching; Review Curriculum

Change Process; and, Review UNI's Student First Campaign. Chair Bankston asked the Senators A lengthy discussion followed.

Senator MacLin moved to form an Ad Hoc committee to look at the issue of grade inflation; second by Senator Wurtz.

Senators MacLin, Heston and Wurtz volunteered to serve on the committee, with Senator MacLin acting as chair.

Motion passed.

Chair Bankston noted that the Senate will also examine the reestablishment of the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and reviewing the Curriculum Change Process as time allows in the spring.

ADJOURNMENT

DRAFT FOR SENATOR'S REVIEW

MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE MEETING

12/13/04

1614

PRESENT: Ronnie Bankston, Cliff Chancey, Cindy Herndon, Melissa Heston, Rob Hitlan, Otto MacLin, Pierre-Damien Mvuyekure, Chris Ogbondah, Steve O'Kane, Phil Patton, Dan Power, Donna Vinton, Barbara Weeg, Susan Wurtz, Mir Zaman

Absent: Karen Couch Breitbach, Susan Koch, Aaron Podolefsky, Gayle Pohl, Laura Strauss, Denise Tallakson, Dharendra Vajpeyi

Bev Kopper was attending for Provost Podolefsky.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bankston called the meeting to order at 3:20 P.M.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes of the 11/22/04 meeting by Senator Chancey; second by Senator Herndon. Motion passed.

CALL FOR PRESS IDENTIFICATION

No press present.

COMMENTS FROM PROVOST PODOLEFSKY

Bev Kopper was attending today's meeting for the Provost as he was involved in a collective bargaining meeting. He did ask that the Senate be informed that he will be at the Board of Regents meeting this Wednesday and Thursday. The agenda and docket for that meeting can be found on the web.

COMMENTS FROM FACUTY CHAIR, DAN POWER

Faculty Chair Power noted that he had no comments but would like to extend seasons greetings to the Senate.

COMMENTS FROM CHAIR BANKSTON

Chair Bankston noted that he will also be attending the Board of Regents meeting on Wednesday and Thursday in Ames.

CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR ITEMS FOR DOCKETING

870 Resolution on Dual Career Couples

Motion to docket in regular order by Senate MacLin as item #780 by Senator Chancey; second by Senator Zaman.

Motion passed.

Chair Bankston noted that this item will be discussed at the January 10, 2005 meeting.

ONGOING BUSINESS

Chair Bankston stated that the final document from the Faculty Senate on Faculty Development/Resources that was sent to the Campus Advisory Group (CAG) was included in the senator's packets. Documents from each college with individual comments were also included.

He noted that the CAG met for a retreat last Tuesday and they are in the process of constructing a white paper.

CONSIDERATION OF DOCKETED ITEMS

779 Liberal Arts Core Committee Annual Report for 2003-2004 Academic Year

Bev Kopper, Liberal Arts Core Coordinator, was present to review the report. She noted that the Liberal Arts Core Committee (LACC) has been extremely busy reviewing new Capstone proposals and that is why there was a delay in getting this report to the Senate. The report was approved in its entirety by the LACC the middle of October.

Dr. Kopper highlighted aspects of the report for the Senate. She noted that the LACC is continuing their focus on enhancing the Core, completing category reviews, and developing a Student Outcomes Assessments (SOA) plan.

The LACC looked at activities to ensure the quality and excellence of the Core. For example, the Committee examines class size, increasing tenure/tenure-track faculty, ensuring consistency and quality of core courses, and registration concerns on an ongoing basis.

Dr. Kopper noted that prior to last year the Senate had requested that the Committee engage in discussions about Capstone and evaluation of the Core as a whole, and to report back to the Senate Fall 2003 with recommendations. The LACC had extensive discussions prior to bringing those recommendations to the Senate. Page 2 of the report notes those discussions that resulted with the Committee meeting the charge and bringing recommendations to the Senate which were acted on in April.

Additional activities that the LACC engaged in included reviewing new course proposals and providing input on the Carver Grant, summer institutes and other programs to the Associate Provost. As Coordinator, Dr. Kopper is also involved in other activities including presentations to parents of new students, presentations during summer orientation, meeting with summer orientation faculty advisors, student staff, and Academic Advising Advisory Council. These activities are all efforts to support the activities of the Core and promote a full understanding of the Core.

A major responsibility of the LACC is the completion of Category Reviews. The review of Category IV, Social Science, was conducted 2002-2003 and reported last year. Based on the review the Committee recommended that faculty involved in multiple sections of those courses meet and discuss issues concerning quality and consistency, and that faculty of those courses consider placing their syllabi on the web to increase available information to students. The Committee was also very supportive of the recommendation for smaller class sizes.

The Category V, Communication Essentials, was conducted last year, with their oral report being received. This year the Personal Wellness Category will be reviewed and the Senate should expect those two reports this academic year.

Another major undertaking of the LACC, Dr. Kopper reported, is the development of a Student Outcomes Assessment plan. The LACC has reviewed the use of the academic profile and other instruments that will be used to assess learning outcomes.

The Committee had planned to use category review data as a part of the SOA plan for the Core. Last April the LACC was informed that the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (CSBS) had decided not to do SOA's so that data was not available for the NCA Report. The Committee will be looking at how they integrate those Category Reviews and Outcomes Assessments into the whole plan.

Dr. Kopper reviewed future directions and concerns of the Committee, noting that some concerns are ongoing.

Dr. Kopper stated that she is amazed at the amount of work that the committee does and the dedication of members, noting that they have extended the hours that the committee meets to accommodate the scheduling demands related to Capstone.

Senator Heston asked if the CSBS gave any rationale as to why they chose not to do SOA's. Dr. Kopper responded that the LACC was not given any reason for this and they were quite surprised to find that it was not done. However, she has been informed that they did complete some assessments this fall.

In response to Senator MacLin's question on the structure of the review teams and who they report to, Dr. Kopper replied that the Review Team is charged by the Dean.

Faculty Chair Power asked who was on the LACC. Dr. Kopper referred the Senate to page 8 of the report, which list the

2003-2004 LACC members. It was noted that Roy Sandstrom has fulfilled his term and Michael Shott has replaced him as the CSBS representative. The student representative is now Joe Murphy and Donna Vinton has replaced Reginald Green on the Committee. Dr. Kopper added that there has been excellent student representation on this committee.

Senator Heston asked how the LACC will approach improving grading practices and standards, which was listed as a future direction and concern of the Committee. Dr. Kopper responded that the LACC asks the review teams to look at grading practices. The Committee ran out of time last year to look at this as they were busy reviewing new Capstone proposals for this fall. They hope to begin discussions on this matter in the spring.

Dr. Kopper reviewed the Capstone experience in response to Senator Heston's question, noting that three new Capstone courses were offered this fall in addition to the Environment, Technology and Society (ETS). There will be 14 sections of several new courses offered during the spring semester. The Committee has also reviewed three additional Capstone courses and they have been approved as future offerings. All of the faculty teaching these new courses are tenure/tenure track faculty. In addition to the 14 new sections, there will be 23 sections of ETS being offered during the spring semester with 48% being taught by tenure/tenure track faculty. Class size has also been reduced in the ETS courses.

One of the things that the LACC looks at in these Capstone offerings are interdisciplinary courses that will be attractive to students of different majors. In looking at the enrollment of new courses there is a mix of students from diverse majors.

A brief faculty and student survey was developed this fall and a pilot assessment has just been conducted which included issues relating to criteria of the new Capstone models; two or more diverse disciplines, being intellectually challenging, using critical thinking skills, and providing opportunities for writing and making presentations. The results have not yet been reviewed but they are hoping this data will help them refine the evaluation.

In response to Senator MacLin's question, Dr. Kopper stated that the LACC has only rejected one proposed Capstone course as it didn't meet the criteria for the new model.

Chair Bankston noted last April the Senate a three-year experiment for Capstone, and for this to not carry over into the fourth year a evaluation decision has to be made in January/February 2007. The Senate needs to specify the types of data that will be used in the evaluation process.

Dr. Kopper commented that last year one of the big concerns was if there would be sufficient response in proposing new Capstone courses but the response has been positive both as far as offerings being proposed and students registering for them.

She also commented that she has been asked if these courses can be submitted in the current curriculum cycle and noted that these are experimental courses.

Senator Heston asked if there was any thought when the Senate passed this proposal that these courses would become permanent Capstone options, or an ongoing "refreshing" of Capstone offerings. Is it a question of increasing the base curriculum or making sure that there is always high quality Capstone options available. It sounds as though department heads and deans are already looking at these as options to expand their curriculum.

Dr. Kopper responded that the departments that are offering the majority of the new Capstone courses would like to offer them on a regular basis. She noted several courses that are being developed will be offered by different faculty members.

Senator Heston asked the diversity of colleges proposing the Capstone offerings. Dr. Kopper noted that there are five from CHFA, 3 from CNS, 1 from COE, CSBS has 8, and CBA has none. Dr. Heston noted that some colleges may not have the resources to offer new Capstone courses.

In response to Faculty Chair Power's question as to how many sections are being offered per semester, Dr. Kopper stated that there are approximately 30 sections of ETS offered a semester. This spring there will be 14 new Capstone experience courses offered and 23 ETS courses. There will be a reduction in the number of ETS courses being offered. Senator Chancey noted that that reduction would amount to a savings of about \$35,000 for the year going to CNS. It was noted, however, there are additional costs involved with adjuncts. Discussion followed.

Chair Bankston received the Liberal Arts Core Committee Annual Report for 2003 - 2004 Academic Year on behalf of the Faculty Senate.

Senator Heston moved, as a friendly amendment, for the Faculty Senate to extend a note of appreciation to the Liberal Arts Core Committee for their dedication and hard work; second by Senator MacLin.

Senator Herndon commented that when the Senate was pursuing the discussion on what would make UNI a good place to work, one of the things that came up was recognition. She feels that some type of letter of appreciation recognizing the hard work and dedication of the LACC be sent to all the people that have served on the LACC, noting the tremendous amount of work they have accomplished. She noted that she was not sure where to draw the line of who to include in this recognition.

Motion passed.

Chair Bankston noted that he will prepare a letter of appreciation to members of the LACC that are currently serving.

New Business for Discussion

Chair Bankston noted that the Senate is providing an opportunity for Senators to bring forward items for discussion.

Chair Bankston stated that when the Senate addressed what would make UNI a better place there were four categories that items were placed; one was items that the Faculty Senate could address in the future. He distributed a list of six items that had been placed on the Faculty Senate list and noted that he would like to begin addressing these items if time permits in the spring. The items are: Establish a Faculty Senate Speaker and Seminar Series; Evaluate Initial and On-Going New Faculty Orientation; Examine Possible Grade Inflation On Campus; Investigate Reestablishment of the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching; Review Curriculum Change Process; and, Review UNI's Student First Campaign. Chair Bankston asked the senators to prioritize the items.

Senator MacLin commented that two things that come up frequently with colleagues are grade inflation and the Student First campaign. He also noted that addressing these issues is important but would involve a lot of time and committee work, and there would be no easy cure.

Senator Heston noted that she agreed with Senator MacLin on the grade inflation issue. She also supported a review of the curriculum change process.

Senator Vinton stated that in looking at the reestablishment of the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching there may be a timeline, which may be sufficient reason to look at it before some of the other issues.

Senator Mvuyekure had a question about grade inflation, who decides that this is a concern, is it a department issue, college issue, university issue. What criteria are being used to determine this? He believes that if an "A" student deserves an "A", so be it. With who does this judgment lie?

Senator Wurtz responded that it does not necessarily need to be addressed at one specific level but when looking at GPA's over large groups. The quality of work that is now expected for an A as opposed to what was expected at some point in the past, that is what's meant as grade inflation.

Senator Heston also noted that there is clear evidence that there is grade inflation at UNI as GPA's have increased in the last two to three decades, from about a 2.0 - 2.5 to a 3.0. Is that because our students are better, the standards have been lowered to allow for the fact that more students have to work more hours than in the past, or are there other factors involved? She also noted that entering ACT scores have increased so perhaps our GPA's should be higher. This is a complex issue that the Senate should be concerned about especially when there are perceptions that we have some how lowered our standards. There is academic freedom but if you want to give all "A's" you have to be able to justify it.

Senator O'Kane noted that in traditional grading a "C" meant average and that was not a bad thing, but part of the problem may be in what do we mean when we give a "C", a "B", or an "A".

Senator Heston remarked that minimum standards set at college levels will automatically skew GPA's, they will automatically be higher. If students can't get into a college they will go to another one that doesn't require such a high GPA. So there are a number of factors that can influence what we're seeing. Discussion followed.

Senator Chancey stated that he supports Senator Vinton's suggestion that the Senate investigate the reestablishment of the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching. He also noted that

examining grade inflation is such an open-ended topic that all can weigh in on it and recommends it not be discussed at the Senate level but as a campus-wide discussion. Chair Bankston noted that he agreed but believes it has to be supported or directed by a body such as the Senate.

Senator Wurtz commented that another piece of the grade inflation issue is the rigor of the standards being applied and is not that something that the LACC addresses in regards to the Capstone courses. This is an effort that is being addressed by the university at least in one place.

Senator MacLin moved to form an Ad Hoc committee to look at the issue of grade inflation; second by Senator Wurtz.

Faculty Chair Power asked if this was not something that the Senate should send to the Educational Policies Committee. It was noted that the Ed Policies Committee is more involved with interpreting policy but we should check with Russ Campbell, Educational Policies Committee Chair, if this is something appropriate for that committee to address.

Senators MacLin, Heston and Wurtz volunteered to serve on the committee, with Senator MacLin acting as chair.

Motion passed.

Chair Bankston noted that the Senate will also examine the reestablishment of the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and reviewing the Curriculum Change Process as time allows in the spring. It was suggested that the Senate get input from the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching Committee. Chair Bankston will extend an invitation to the chair of that committee to talk with the Senate.

Senator Herndon questioned why the Student First Campaign was on the list for the Faculty Senate to review. Chair Bankston responded that some faculty are concerned that the campaign has shifted instructional priorities.

In response to Faculty Chair Power's question as to who was in charge of new faculty orientation, Bev Kopper noted it was Associate Provost Koch and that she is also involved. He suggested that the Senate invite those responsible parties for an informal presentation.

The Ad Hoc committee on grade inflation asked for a timeline. Chair Bankston stated that considering the size of the task an initial report would be appropriate for the end of the year, either the April 11 or April 25 meeting. He also noted that the Senate would be looking at the report as a starting.

Faculty Chair Power noted that establishing a Faculty Senate Speaker and Seminar Series would require financial assistance and it was decided that the Chair of the Faculty, Chair of the Faculty Senate and Vice-Chair of the Faculty Senate would approach the Provost on this.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Senator Chancey; second by Senator Zaman.
Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dena Snowden
Faculty Senate Secretary